

King Street track should keep cyclists off sidewalks - Hawaii News - Honolulu Star-Advertiser

StarAdvertiser.com

King Street track should keep cyclists off sidewalks

By June Watanabe

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Nov 17, 2014

LAST UPDATED: 08:07 a.m. HST, Nov 17, 2014



Question: I was exiting Kaiser's Honolulu Clinic onto South King Street recently and looked both ways as we automobile drivers have the sidewalk, green bike lane and at least two more lanes to view before proceeding safely.

All lanes looked clear, so I cautiously drove forward, straddled the sidewalk and bike lane for one last look at traffic, when out of the corner of my eye, I see a biker heading Diamond Head on the sidewalk. I moved through

the bike lane and into the parking lane to allow the bike to pass. Operators of both two- and four-wheel vehicles have a steep learning curve to become familiar with the new bike lane to assure the safety of all. Are bikers supposed to use the sidewalk if there's a bike lane?

Answer: One of the functions of the King Street Cycle Track pilot project is to focus most of the bicyclists on one area of the street, including off the sidewalk, explained Michael Formby, director of the city Department of Transportation Services.

"For now, however, with the cycle track under installation, bicyclists are still riding on the street and on the sidewalks," he said. "So we ask for the motorists' patience."

But bicycles are not allowed on sidewalks in business districts.

So, once the cycle track is completed, "we expect no bicycles on the sidewalks as King Street is a business district, and we encourage and want all on-street bicyclists to use the cycle track," Formby said.

The cycle track, which runs for approximately two miles from Alapai Street to Isenberg Street, officially will open the first week of December. The grand-opening time and date will be announced shortly.

Formby also explained that the bikeway is "not intended to be a freeway for cyclists."

There will be many times when bicyclists in the cycle track will have to stop and/or yield to cars that are exiting or entering intersections/driveways/streets on the mauka side of King Street, he said.

Other key points:

» The cycle track is for bicyclists only: no mopeds, Segways, skateboarding or jogging will be allowed. Pedestrians should not be walking in that lane.

» The green-painted areas designate "conflict" areas where everyone has to be extra cautious. Green is the federally approved color for bicycle infrastructure.

» Parking stalls will be moved to the right of the cycle track, although parking meters will remain on the sidewalk.

For more information, check the city's website honolulu.gov/bicycle/kingcycletrack; Facebook: facebook.com/HonoluluBicycleProgram; Twitter: @BicycleProgram; phone: 768-8335; email: csayers@honolulu.gov.

Bike Helmets

Regarding the complaint in the Nov. 12 Kokua Line column about police not enforcing the bicycle helmet law in Kailua: Officers spoke with Kailua Intermediate School officials, who reminded parents of the law, said Michelle Yu, spokeswoman for the Honolulu Police Department.

Officers also issued 10 warnings to students and talked to their parents, she said.

Under state law, anyone under the age of 16 is required to wear a helmet when riding a bicycle on any public street, bikeway or property, or when riding in a seat attached to a bike or being towed by a bike.

The parent or guardian of a child found in violation faces a maximum fine of \$25.

Write to "Kokua Line" at Honolulu Star-Advertiser, 7 Waterfront Plaza, Suite 210, 500 Ala Moana Blvd., Honolulu 96813; call 529-4773; fax 529-4750; or email kokualine@staradvertiser.com.

Copyright (c) Honolulu Star-Advertiser